

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SUBJECT Mining of Uranium in Estonia

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research which was initiated in July 1948 in the petroleum territory of Johvi, Estonia, resulted in the discovery of pitchblende. As of 18 August 1949, mining of the uranium had been in operation for about six months. The first samples gave indices of 1/24 and 1/26 (radioactivity of the mineral = content of uranium). The mineral is extracted from a depth of 18 meters.

2. The deposits are found between Johvi and Kohtla-Jarve, in the vicinity of a small village which was evacuated and which now contains about 3,000 workers. A great many of these workers are Russians but some are Estonians who were picked from the most faithful members of the Estonian Communist Party. The section where the uranium is mined is surrounded by a brick wall about 3.5 meters high, which is guarded by sentries who stand about 50 meters apart. The material is loaded into sealed railway cars and sent in the direction of Leningrad under armed guard.
3. In the same region, near Ahtme, there is a large electric station which apparently supplies the region of Leningrad with power, but which might be used for the purpose of running a cyclotron. It is a thermal station which utilizes mazout. Construction of the station was begun by the Germans in 1942. In 1945, the Soviets captured the works. The first turbine should begin operation in October 1949 and the remaining two turbines should begin operation in 1950. About 4,000 workers, most of whom are Estonians, are employed in this station. Only the engineers are Russians. No precautions of a military nature are taken.

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